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Concordia University still a leader in organic waste management among Quebec institutions

Concordia University is launching its new large-scale composting system on **September 9th 2008**. This new facility, the first among Quebec universities, will help reach the [Quebec Residual Materials Management Policy 1998-2008](#)ⁱ ten years ahead of the City of Montreal, as outlined in its [Draft of Waste Management Master Plan for the Montréal Agglomeration 2008-2012](#)ⁱⁱ. The target is a 65% diversion of organic waste from the landfill. This project has received financial support by Environment Canada and the Sustainability Action Fund.

Concordia University sends approximately 650 tons of waste to landfills each year. Within 5 years, Concordia will be composting 100 tonnes of organic waste annually. This new facility is located on the Loyola campus in Notre-Dame-de-Grace. According to the R⁴'s 2005 waste audit conducted, about 20% of the university's wastes are biodegradable; 60% of kitchen and cafeteria waste is organic. The previous smaller composting systems operated at the university could only handle fruits and vegetable waste, but the new automated thermophilic system is designed to allow for the processing of dairy, meat and grain products.

Every tonne of organic waste composted on site, will save two tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions and significantly decrease acid-rain and smog precursors by cutting down on transportation. The compost produced will be used to maintain campus greenspaces. Factoring annual increases in waste disposal costs, this project will provide a return on investment for Concordia within five years.

Concordia was the first university to be certified *ICI on recycle* by Recyc-Quebec in 2007. R⁴ Compost received recognition by the City of Montreal and the Conseil Régional de l'Environnement in 2007 for its vermicomposting facility on the rooftop greenhouse of the downtown campus. R⁴ was awarded a Forces AVENIR – Environment category prize in 2007 for its composting program. R⁴ is currently developing a technical guide with the financial participation of Recyc-Québec and offers consultation services to help other institutions, businesses and industries to set-up similar waste management systems.

R⁴ Concordia “rethink, reduce, reuse, recycle” is a working group of Sustainable Concordia which concentrates on environmental initiatives while integrating social and economic factors into its decision making.

For more information, visit <http://r4.concordia.ca> or contact Louise Hénault-Ethier at (514) 848-2424 ext. 7351 or recycle@alcor.concordia.ca

ⁱ http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/matieres/inter_en.htm

ⁱⁱ http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?_pageid=916,17777560&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL